



The Task Force on Court Facilities
455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102-3660

Planning Committee - North Meeting Report
Wednesday, January 26, 2000, 9:00AM

Marin County Civic Center, Sheriffs Department
San Rafael, CA

ATTENDEES: NORTH COMMITTEE MEMBERS: PRESENT: Mr. Mike Courtney Sheriff Robert Doyle Mr. Gary Freeman Hon. Michael Nail Mr. Anthony Tyrrell ABSENT: Hon. Joan B. Bechtel GUESTS Judge Stephen A. Dombrink, Alameda Superior Court, Chair, Unification Working Group Hon. Daniel J. Kremer, Chair, Task Force	CONSULTANTS TO THE TASK FORCE: Mr. Andrew Cupples, Daniel, Mann, Johnson, & Mendenhall Mr. Jeff Buck, Daniel, Mann, Johnson, & Mendenhall Mr. Tim Fedorchak, Dan Smith and Assoc. Ms. Kathleen Halaszynski, Daniel, Mann, Johnson, & Mendenhall TASK FORCE STAFF: Mr. Robert Lloyd, Senior Facilities Planner, AOC Mr. Patricia Bonderud, AIA, CSI, Facilities Planner, AOC
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I. COMMITTEE CHARGE

Sheriff Doyle welcomed the committee members and thanked them for their attendance. A. Cupples reviewed the agenda and the overall purpose of the committee meeting – to review the findings of the Task Force regarding the current state of courts facilities on a county-by-county basis prior to distribution to the county and local court for review and comment.

II. REPORT OF THE UNIFICATION WORKING GROUP

Judge Stephen Dombrink, Chair of the Task Force Unification Working Group, presented a summary of the findings and recommendations of the group. It was noted that Los Angeles County had voted the previous week to unify leaving only Monterey, Kings and Kern counties to remain a Municipal/Superior system. The Unification Working Group summarized five main areas where unification may lead to better utilization of facilities. (See attached report). Generally, these recommendations focused on how to use each facility based on its physical capabilities, noting that all court buildings do not have to house all types of functions. The committee generally agreed with the recommendations of the working group regarding facility utilization and planning, but questioned the basis for stating that every community of 20,000 should have access to a facility. Judge Dombrink noted that this was also discussed at length by the working group in

terms of setting a community size vs. defining travel times, etc. The working group felt that a combination of these factors should be considered, but that access to the courts in smaller communities in some manner was an important criteria for planning.

III. MEETING SCHEDULE

The consultants distributed a revised and simplified schedule for upcoming committee meetings, planned surveys and interviews in order to allow participation by Task Force members in county interviews. The next committee meeting will occur on March 2nd, in conjunction with the Napa Task Force meeting. Committee meeting #3 is to be held in Vallejo at a date to be determined.

It was noted that the North and South committees currently plan to meet on the same day. Justice Kremer requested that the schedules be revised to allow at-large members to attend both meetings if they so choose. Schedule revisions will be discussed at the March Task Force meeting in Napa.

IV. COUNTY PRESENTATIONS

Yolo County – Tim Fedorchak and Jeff Buck presented an overview of the county and the current facilities comparing the state of existing facilities to future needs. Currently, the county utilizes 10 Judicial FTE's, and is expected to grow to 15 Judicial FTE's by the year 2020. The current caseload is 42,547 and expected to grow to 62,416 by the year 2020.

Under the current use, 5 courtrooms were found to be adequate and an additional f4 were found to be marginal. The result was a shortfall of 1 courtroom for the current use.

Overall space required for the current use is 89,473 square feet. Considering only adequate space, there is a shortfall of 55,710 square feet for the current need. Considering both marginal and adequate space, there is a shortfall of 38,211 square feet.

The key planning issues considered include:

- Considerations for a county with moderate population density, scattered development and limited specialization by case type,
- Commitment to County Government Center,
- Alternate development at New Jail Site, and
- Downtown focus vs. parking

The consultant team presented the following planning options to the committee:

- Option #1 - Retain Existing/Build New Criminal Downtown
- Option #2 - Retain Existing/Build New Criminal at Jail Site
- Option #3 - New Replacement Courthouse

The committee concurred with the options as defined by the consultants. The committee agreed with the consultant team that Option #2 to retain the existing facility and build a new Criminal Courthouse at the County Jail site seemed the most reasonable. It was noted that local court and county input was required prior to including any recommendations in the state-wide plan.

Further detail of Option #2 includes:

- Replace existing Traffic Court and relocate to Old Jail Building,
- Retain existing courthouse, re-use 8 courtrooms for non-custody cases,
- Abandon in-custody use of Old Jail Building. Re-use for other agencies (e. g, Traffic Court), and
- Build separate Criminal Courts building adjacent to the new jail outside of town with 6 new in-custody capable courtrooms and related support space.

Calaveras County – Tim Fedorchak and Jeff Buck presented an overview of the county and the current facilities comparing the state of existing facilities to future needs. Currently, the county utilizes 3 Judicial FTE's and is expected to grow to 5 Judicial FTE's by the year 2020. The current caseload is 8,678 and expected to grow to 22,107 by the year 2020.

The key planning issues considered include:

- A county with relatively low population density, scattered settlements and 3 multi-purpose courts,
- Commitment to County Government Center, and
- Additional development at County Center.

The consultant team presented the following planning options to the committee:

- Option #1 - Retain / Expand Existing
- Option #2 - Retain Existing/Build New Criminal Courthouse
- Option #3 – Build a New Courthouse

The committee concurred with the options as defined by the consultants. There was some discussion regarding the possibility of expanding the existing Legal Building. Tim Fedorchak noted that this option was outlined in the 92' Master Plan completed by Dan Smith and Associates. However, subsequently this option was decided against due to a number of constraints including parking and renovation difficulty. The committee agreed with the consultant team that Option #3 to build a new courthouse and renovate the existing building for other agencies seemed the most reasonable. It was noted that local court and county input was required prior to including any recommendations in the state-wide plan.

Further detail of Option #3 includes:

- Build a new courthouse on the existing site with a total of 5 in-custody courtrooms,
- Use existing legal building for other agencies, and
- Related development at County Center. Add detention capacity in conjunction with new courthouse.

Contra Costa County – Kathleen Halaszynski presented an overview of the county and the current facilities comparing the state of existing facilities to future needs. Currently, the county utilizes 47 Judicial FTE's, and is expected to grow to 63 Judicial FTE's by the year 2020. The current caseload is 190,268 and expected to grow to 281,105 by the year 2020.

The key planning issues considered include:

- Moderately sized county with a combination of mountain, valley, and coastal (Bay) regions as well as rural, urban, and suburban areas,
- Commitment to access to the courts (local service centers) and service to the fast growing east county, and
- Recently completed master plan with the options as noted below.

The consultant team presented the following planning options to the committee:

- Option #1 - "Status Quo" /Partial Consolidation - Family & Juvenile
- Option #2 - Decentralize and Consolidate - Family & Juvenile
- Option #3 - Consolidated Family & Juvenile /Maintain Local Service Centers

The committee concurred with the options as defined by the consultants. The committee agreed with the consultant team that Option #3 to consolidate family & juvenile and maintain local service centers seemed the most reasonable. It was noted that local court and county input was required prior to including any recommendations in the state-wide plan.

Further detail of Option #3 includes:

- Renovate the Old County Courthouse district attorney space to house administrative functions.
- Construct an addition to the Bray Courthouse in the existing parking lot,
- Use the Jail Annex "as-is",

- Abandon court use of the Finance Building,
- Abandon court use of the Veterans Hall,
- Construct a new Juvenile Justice Center,
- Abandon court use of the Lions Gate facility,
- Construct a new combined facility to serve the Danville & Mt. Diablo areas,
- Abandon court use the Concord facility,
- Revise the mission of the Pittsburg and Richmond (Bay) facilities to be used for traffic, small claims and non-jury criminal and civil trials,
- Construct a new family court, and
- Lease or build archive storage facility.

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

Finally, there was some discussion regarding a “person-to-person” review with the counties. It was discussed that some counties may require a presentation in conjunction with the written report.

Sheriff Doyle called the meeting to a close.